

Principal Examiners' Report

February 2016

Pearson Edexcel Functional Skills
English Reading Level 2 (E202)

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Centre report Functional Skills Reading Level Two – E202

General comments

This paper proved to be an effective test of Level 2 Reading Skills. Learners responded well to the topic of 'What is a sport?' and all three texts proved accessible. The full range of marks was seen.

Question 1

This was a multiple choice question and most learners were able to answer it correctly by identifying a belief in the text.

Question 2

Most learners performed well on this question and many were able to accurately explain both quotations. The most common error was learners copying sections from the text, rather than showing that they understood the quotation by using some of their own words to explain it.

Question 3

To gain a mark for this question learners needed to identify why the text was written and also to link this to the topic of the text, e.g. 'to inform the reader about a debate on what is a sport'. In general this question was answered well but there were also a number of learners who did not give enough detail, e.g. just writing 'to inform'. Other learners were able to describe what the text was about but were not able to give a purpose, e.g. writing 'It's about sport'.

Question 4

Most learners were able to gain a mark for this question by giving a valid reason as to why Text B was the most suitable text for showing the link between health and sport. The most common error seen here was learners answering the question with a quotation, rather than giving a reason. A quotation from the text must be supported by a brief explanation to gain a mark here.

Question 5

This was a multiple choice question and most learners were able to answer it correctly by selecting option D.

Question 6

Most learners were able to gain the mark here by correctly identifying an exclamation. A few learners opted for an exaggeration because of the exclamation mark, but this was not correct.

Question 7

This question asked learners to explain two ways that the writer of Text C used to present views on sport and then to give an example to support each of these. On this paper the ways used included use of a definition, a rhetorical question and headings and sub-headings. A numbered list was also used, although a number of learners identified this incorrectly as showing the use of bullet points.

This question proved challenging for many learners as they did not give a way that the writer used to present views, but merely gave two quotations (e.g. 'Based on the five criteria above, are these sports?'). These responses could not be rewarded as no 'way' was identified. It is essential that centres teach learners how to accurately identify the ways in which writers convey meaning in a range of texts.

Question 8

Learners responded well to this question and managed to find appropriate points from each text. The majority of learners made good use of the texts to produce detailed responses, explaining why Chess should be a sport. Most learners achieved at least three marks and many did better than this by selecting relevant and precise ideas. The most common mistakes here were learners only selecting information from one text, or giving answers that were not based on the texts.

Question 9

This question posed few difficulties for most learners, with many gaining the two marks available. Where learners made mistakes with this question it was usually because they failed to find quotes that referred specifically to what happened in other countries.

Question 10

This question was a good discriminator. Most learners were able to find relevant examples from each text, but they needed to compare these in order to secure three marks or above. Many learners wrote about the two texts separately and this limited the mark that they could obtain for this question. More able learners made one or more comparison between the texts and were able to achieve four or five marks.

Question 11

This question asked learners to make a judgment as to which text is most useful for a particular purpose. The large majority of learners correctly identified Text C in this instance. In order to gain a mark for the reason, learners needed to give a specific point, e.g. 'it gives you key dates in Olympic history'. When giving a reason they also need to do more than paraphrase the question, e.g. 'it tells you about the history of the Olympics.' This response would not gain a mark. Most learners who gave a valid reason went on to provide an appropriate example from the text.

Question 12

This question asked learners to find one piece of evidence from each text which showed how sport is funded. Most learners were able to do this successfully, with the majority scoring at least two marks. A number of learners did not complete this question, suggesting that time management may have been an issue.

Question 13

This was a multiple choice question and most learners were able to answer it correctly by selecting option D. This question requires learners to identify themes from two of the texts.

Recommendations for Centres

1. In order to be well prepared for this test, learners should have access to a wide range of texts from a variety of contexts that have been written for different audiences and purposes. Learners should also practise comparing ideas from texts that are on similar themes. This will help learners to feel confident when sitting these papers.
2. During exam preparation, learners should practice each type of question to understand clearly what is being asked of them. This would be particularly helpful for Question 7, where a number of learners did not understand the demands of the questions.
3. When centres are preparing learners for this assessment, it is important that there is the opportunity to practise a wide range of reading strategies. Learners should be able to find points that are both explicit and implied and also be able to recognise techniques that writers use to try and convince readers to agree with their point of view. It is also vital that all learners are aware that they are being tested on their reading skills and so all answers must be rooted in the text, rather than based on their own experience.
4. Centres are advised that the guidance 'You do **not** need to write in sentences' has been removed from this paper. This is a reading test and learners are not marked for their writing skills, but it is important that learners write in sufficient detail in order to be able to access the higher marks for each question. This is especially true of Questions 8 and 10, which offer five marks each.
5. Finally, centres should advise learners to be aware of time and to ensure that they attempt all questions. The time for this test has been increased to one hour but learners will still need to manage their time carefully. There were a number of learners who did not complete all of the questions on this text and this made it extremely difficult for these learners to gain a pass.

Pass mark for E202 in February 2016

Maximum mark	30
Pass mark	19
UMS mark	6

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